

Every Child Learning Every Day



April 2003

An early childhood newsletter from the State Department of Education

Volume 2, Issue 4

READY TO LEARN

Book focuses on family connections

Idaho teachers have shared some of their favorite books and activities for children as part of Superintendent of Public Instruction Marilyn Howard's "Dinner and a Book" initiative.

This month's suggestion was submitted by Louise Hansen, second grade teacher, Hazel T. Stuart Elementary, Shelley.

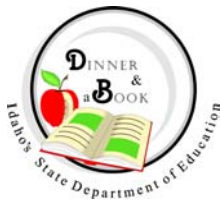
Title: "All The Places to Love," by Patricia Macachlan, with wonderful paintings by Mike Wimmer.

Synopsis: "All the Places to Love" is a tender story, told by a young boy, of the special ways his parents and grandparents show their love for him and their appreciation of nature. At the birth of his little sister, the boy plans to share his rich heritage with her. This story shows the positive impact one generation can have on the next generation.

Suggestion: Interaction, activity, or recipe:

1. Parents or grandparents read to child.
2. Discuss the places you loved as a child.
3. Ask your child, or grandchild, to show you the little places he or she loves.
4. Do a scrapbook page to preserve the places you love.

Related books/topics: "I'll Love You Forever" by Robert Munsch.



Kids need reassuring in times of strife

Dear Reader:

At the time we are producing this newsletter, the war with Iraq has started. Times of strife can be difficult for children and for adults.

The National Association for Young Children offers this information for adults to provide young children emotional support and show them that they are safe:

Offer reassurance through physical closeness. Holding children brings comfort and a sense of security. Children may need extra hugs, smiles and hand-holding. If they seem worried, tell them they are safe and that someone is there to care for them.

Maintain structure. Children need consistency and security in their day, especially when the world around them seems confusing or unpredictable, or when adults are preoccupied or upset. Provide a framework that stays the same from day to day.

Respond to children's interest in talking about the war. Children



Dr. Marilyn Howard
Superintendent of Public Instruction

gain a sense of control by talking about things that bother or confuse them. At the same time, children should not be pressured to talk; let them set the pace for the conversation.

Offer experiences that help children release tension. Give worried children more time for relaxing, dramatic play, time outdoors, at the gym, or in the park so children have opportunities for physical activity that provides an emotional release.

Model peaceful resolution to conflict. Let children see you using peaceful strategies for solving problems through negotiation, compromise, and discussion.

Watch for changes in behavior. Some children reflect their increased stress and anxiety through specific changes in behavior, often reverting to earlier stages of development.

Take care of yourself. Remember to take time to deal with your own feelings and needs, so that you can continue to provide the comfort, reassurance, and stability that children need.

READY TO LEARN

Connect reading with real world experiences

Helping children understand how stories "work" and how to understand connection between what they read and their life experiences are important skills in building literacy.

Some activities that will help children learn about how stories are put together include:

****Looking at pictures and telling a story about the pictures.** First you might want to tell a story to give the child a model for how to do it. Then ask the child to tell a story.

****All children have familiar, loved stories about themselves and family members.** When retelling the story, change or omit part of the story, and make a game out of what you left out.

****Before you read a story together, look at the**



pictures and play a guessing game telling what the story might be about. When reading

the story, wonder out loud what might happen next.

****Talk about an event (going to the zoo, going to visit someone).**

****Draw pictures together as the child tells the story.** Write down the child's story under the pictures and make the pictures into a little book.

Some timely activities to help children connect reading with their experiences include:

**** Read "When Spring Comes" by Robert Maass and write down no more than five words or simple phrases, each**

READING STANDARDS

Each month, the Early Childhood Newsletter focuses on a preschool reading standard.

This month's standard is "Read and respond to a variety of literature to compare and contrast the many dimensions of the human experience."

one on a large piece of paper.

****Add objects to the paper that children have found from home or field trips.**

****Cut out and add pictures from magazines to these papers.**

****Explore the area outside and find a tree or bush that's just beginning to leaf out and bloom.** Take pictures as the tree or bush changes. Post the pictures, and, help the children build a story, in sequence, about the tree and its changes.



RESOURCES

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month

From the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare:

What are some signs of abuse?

Physical abuse

Physical indicators: Unexplained bruises (in various stages of healing), welts, human bite marks, bald spots; unexplained burns, especially cigarette burns or immersion burns; unexplained fractures, lacerations or abrasions.

Behavioral indicators: Self-destructive, withdrawn and aggressive - behavioral extremes; uncomfortable with physical contact; arrives at school early or stays late as if afraid to be at home; complains of soreness or moves uncomfortably; wears clothing inappropriate to weather to cover body.

Physical neglect

Physical indicators: Abandonment; unattended medical needs; consistent lack of supervision; consistent hunger, distended stomach, weak, pale; inappropriate dress, untreated lice, poor hygiene.

Behavioral indicators: Regularly displays fatigue or listlessness, falls asleep in school class; steals food, begs from school classmates; reports that no caretakers is at home; frequently absent or tardy; self destructive.

Sexual abuse

Physical indicators: Often there are no visible indicators; torn, stained or bloody underclothing; pain or itching in genital area; difficulty walking or sitting; bruises or bleeding in external genitalia; venereal disease; frequent urinary or yeast infections.

Behavioral indicators: Withdrawal, chronic depression; excessive seductiveness; role reversal, overly concerned for siblings; poor self esteem, self devaluation, lack of confidence; peer problems, lack of involvement; weight change, eating disorder; suicide attempts; hysteria, lack of emotional control; sudden school difficulties; chronically runs away; inappropriate sex play or premature understanding of sex; threatened by physical contact.

Who's required to report?

Idaho law says that any person who has reason to believe that a child is being abused, neglected, or abandoned must report this to your local law enforcement or the Department of Health and Welfare within 24 hours.

For more information call 1-800-926-2588.

NUTRITION

Mix some fruit salad with Seven Jumps

Fruit is just about the perfect snack. A variety of cubed or sliced or diced fruit mixed with a little flavored yogurt is a year-round favorite. Mix canned and fresh fruit.



Spring fruit bowls can emphasize fruits rich in Vitamin A, such as fresh apricots, cantaloupe, melon, peaches, papaya, and mango. Winter fruit bowls can emphasize citrus fruits, like or-

anges, grapefruit, and tangerines, which are readily available during colder months.

Other fruit available in the early spring include kiwi, apples, bananas, and grapes!

Snack idea: ½ cup mixed fruit and ½ slice cinnamon wheat toast. This is a snack serving in the Child and Adult Care Food Program for a 1- 5 year old. After snack time, here is a fun activity to try called Seven Jumps. You will need some lively music.

Arrange the children in a circle, holding hands facing the

direction in which they will move.

Move around the circle (slide, skip, gallop, fast walk, or run). Stop the music. Everyone will touch one knee to the floor for 10 counts, then stand. Start the music and move in the opposite direction around the circle. Stop the music. Touch one knee to the floor for 5 counts, the other knee touches the floor for 10 counts, then stand. Start the music and move the opposite direction.

This continues, each round add a body part as follows: knee, other knee, elbow, other elbow, stomach, back and forehead.

READY TO LEARN

Make note when pieces are part of the whole

The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics offers simple tips to help parents help children understand math.



This month's skill — Fractions represent parts of a whole.

A very young child will see something cut into three pieces and will believe that there is more after cutting it than before it was cut. This is typical and should not cause alarm in parents. It is one example

of how children and adults think differently!

To understand fractions, children need to think about:

- **what the whole unit is,
- **how many pieces are in the unit, and
- **if the pieces are the same size.

What parents can do:

Many sharing activities help children understand fractions by dividing food, chores, or treats into equal portions. Cutting up pizzas or sharing a pan of brownies are good ways to get children thinking about fractions.

ACTIVITIES

Soar through spring learning with kites

In addition to offering a lot of fun on a windy spring day, kites can help give flight to lessons in art, science, mathematics, history, recreation, culture, and geography.

April is National Kite Month and the website www.nationalkitemonth.org provides simple kite designs as well as lesson plans on a variety of topics from math to social studies.



The American Kitefliers Association and the Kite Trade Association International offer these tips for safe kite flying:

Kite lines conduct electricity so do not fly near overhead power lines. For the same reason do not fly in electrical storms.

Flying lines on larger kites can hurt your hands. Watch out for line burns. If you fly a large kite, wear gloves.

Be aware of who or what is behind you as well as in front of you.

Be aware of the limitations of your skills and

Idaho kite events

April 1-26 Kites on Display, Idaho Falls Visitors Center

April 1-May 4 Kites on Display, Garden Gate Nursery, 442 N. State, Rigby

April 12 Massacre Rocks Kite Fly, Massacre Rocks State Park, on I-86 west of American Falls

April 26 Kiting Just For Fun, Community Park, South end of Holmes Avenue, between 17th & Sunny-side, Idaho Falls

May 2-3 Spring Jamboree, Blackfoot Fair Grounds, Blackfoot.

For more information contact Dean Turnblom at (208) 524-5551.

strength and do not fly anything too large for the conditions, or try anything too complicated near other people.

Make sure kite anchors are strong and secure enough to hold your kite.

Be wary of attaching hard items to kite line - think of what would happen if the line breaks or is cut by another kite.